UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1999/1303
4 January 2000
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

IDENTICAL LETTERS DATED 30 DECEMBER 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Communiqué of the first meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs members of the Mediation and Security Council of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), held in Bamako on 29 December 1999 and devoted to consideration of the political, economic and security situation in Côte d'Ivoire and its implications for the subregion (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Moctar OUANE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE MINISTERS FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS MEMBERS OF THE MEDIATION AND SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES, HELD AT BAMAKO ON 29 DECEMBER 1999

1. Following the overthrow of the democratically elected Government of Henri Konan Bedie on 24 December 1999, Alpha Oumar Konare, President of Mali and current Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), after consultation with his counterparts, gave the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Mediation and Security Council the responsibility of organizing a meeting and recommending appropriate measures in response to the political, economic and security situation in Côte d'Ivoire and its implications for the subregion.

2. The Ministers met in Bamako, Mali, on 29 December 1999.

3. The Ministers from the following member States attended the meeting:

(a) Benin;

(b) The Gambia;

(c) Ghana;

(d) Guinea;

(e) Liberia;

(f) Mali;

(g) Nigeria;

(h) Senegal;

(i) Togo.

4. The meeting considered the memorandum submitted by the Executive Secretary. It also heard separately the delegation of the Ivorian Committee of National Salvation, representing the military junta, and the representative of Henri Konan Bedie.

5. In conformity with the ECOWAS Declaration of Political Principles, adopted in Abuja on 6 July 1999, with the Protocol on the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Regional Security dated 10 December 1999 (Lomé) and the resolution of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) adopted in Algiers in July 1999 by the thirty-fifth session of the Conference of Heads of State and Government, the Ministers reaffirmed the constant position of the Community that only the citizens of a member State are entitled to decide on the choice of their leaders through free, transparent and fair elections.

6. At the conclusion of its work, the Mediation and Security Council strongly condemned the military coup d'état in Côte d'Ivoire.

7. In this respect, the Council urged the Ivorian Committee of National Salvation:

(a) To set up without delay an independent structure to revise the Constitution and the electoral code;

(b) To put in place a transition Government which will have the responsibility of organizing free, transparent and fair general and presidential elections, open to all political parties without exclusion and without discrimination, with a view to restoring constitutional legality and democratic institutions by June 2000 at the latest;

(c) To proceed with the immediate release of all political detainees, to guarantee their security and to allow humanitarian organizations access to the detention centres;

(d) To respect and guarantee human rights throughout the territory of Côte d'Ivoire.

8. The Ministers invited the military junta to continue to extend hospitality to and ensure the safety of all citizens of the Community and foreigners resident in Côte d'Ivoire.

9. The Ministers appealed to all Ivorians to continue to settle their disputes through dialogue and in a spirit of fraternity.

10. The meeting decided that a delegation of the Mediation and Security Council headed by its President and including the Executive Secretary should go to Côte d'Ivoire to inform the new authorities of the above measures. The Council will ensure the implementation of these measures and report thereon to the President of the Conference.

11. The Ministers expressed their deep gratitude to Alpha Oumar Konare, President of Mali, and to the Government and people of Mali for the warm welcome and their generous hospitality, as well as for the excellent facilities made available to them to ensure the success of their meeting.